

Proof Positive We're the Wise Ones

But where can we find solace
in a world with fierce melons?

by Jeff Wozer

Humorist and stand-up comedian

“What’s tan
to you and me
may be called
midnight eggnog
to one company
and dried
sandcastle beige
to another.”

Yes, without question, we, the 50 and older crowd, are infinitely wiser than the rest. My hunches support this. I don’t have the exact figures, but I’m guessing the number of people 50 and older with face tattoos, compared to the number of people younger than 50 with face tattoos, should serve as firm proof.

Another supporting hunch, the keystone of my bias, is that we bear hug what Confucius meant by, “Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated.”

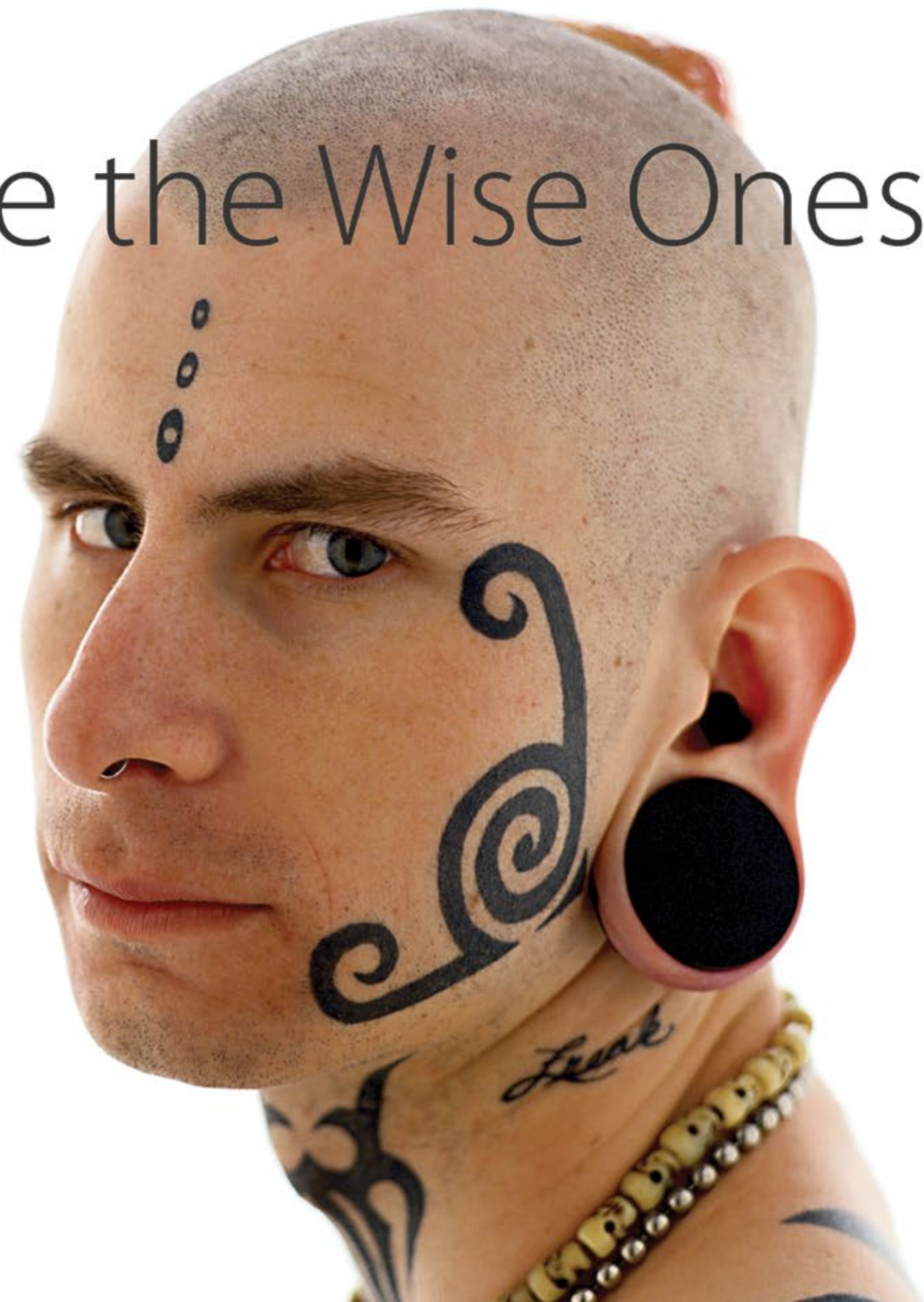
Unlike those younger in age, we recognize the virtues of simplicity. There is a high-white purity behind it. Less truly is more. This age-earned understanding frees us from mindlessly following society’s current compulsion to muddle life and find it necessary — and I say this both literally and figuratively — to reinvent the color wheel.

Thanks to today’s clothing industry there’s no longer a color consensus. What’s tan to you and me may be called midnight eggnog to one company and dried sandcastle beige to another. Our optical world has been purged of its simplicity.

I stopped ordering from a favorite Wyoming-based outdoor company in protest of the inanity of its colors. Teal is called ocean depths. Black is tap shoe. And gray, depending on jacket type, is either smoked pearl or Eifel Tower. Why? What’s the need for this? It only complicates life and may even put us at risk. If I witnessed three armed bank robbers dressed in black flee in a gray SUV and described them to police as three men dressed in tap shoe driving an Eifel Tower SUV with ocean depths wheel rims, I’d be arrested as an accessory.

Society’s crazed need to clutter life with confusion also grips beverage flavors. The naiveté of basing flavors on time-honored tastes — orange, grape, cherry — has been purged by the Huns of marketing in favor of flavors based on attitude and image.

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Quenching one's thirst has become secondary to quenching one's ego.

Gatorade, the top dog of the sports drink industry, offers a flavor called Fierce Melon. How a trailing plant from the gourd family long known for its deliciousness, especially during Sunday brunch, can be assigned an adjective better suited for a Siberian tiger escapes me. But rather than fall to this marketing ploy, I'm holding out hope Gatorade markets a more palatably sounding flavor like Obstreperous Berry.

There's also Glacier Freeze. What kind of taste reference do we have for this? It's a taste without proof. If you were to drink a cherry soda, you could confirm the taste by eating a Bing cherry. But outside of a select group of bearded research scientists measuring Arctic snow and several *National Geographic* photographers filming Emperor penguins, there are not many who can actually verify that Gatorade's Glacier Freeze does indeed taste like a frozen glacier. How do we, as thirsty consumers, know we're actually enjoying the taste of glacier and not some other unverifiable flavor like Irreconcilable Iceberg or Very Fierce Snowmelt?

Curious, I phoned the Gatorade hotline.

"Glacier Freeze," replied the Gatorade operator in a friendly and confident voice, "is a blend of three fruit flavors."

"So it's a marketing ploy?" I probed. "Not really," she politely answered. "It's just easier to call it Glacier Freeze than to actually list the three fruit flavors."

Yes, I thought, but when I imagine combining three fruits, I envision punch in a large glass serving bowl, not a massive, rock-strewn ice slab capable of reshaping the planet's surface.

I wanted to cite the irony of naming a high-energy sport drink after one of the planet's slowest moving features, but because she was cordial, I accepted her answer without challenge and thanked her for her time.

MiO, a liquid water energy drink enhancer, offers a flavor called Green Thunder. Admittedly, I have never pondered the taste possibilities of atmospheric sound, but it made me curious enough to examine the label for a possible weather-thirst proverb like, "Green thunder in morning, thirst take warning. Green thunder at night, thirst take flight." There was none.

And PowerAde, another sports drink giant, offers the

flavor Mountain Berry Blast, making it sound like an alpine laxative.

Where will this nonsense end? It's only a matter of time before scrambled eggs will be renamed disheveled spawn and hash browns pulverized russets. And when I try to order black coffee instead of tap shoe coffee, the younger members of my family will no doubt snicker, maybe even mockingly whisper, "What a simpleton."

But that's OK. I'll smile, taking quiet satisfaction in Leonardo da Vinci's quote, "Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication." ♦



BRAIN GAMES ANSWERS / From Page 18

Answers to Crossword Puzzle

W	A	C	S	T	R	A	P	S	G	A	S	H	
E	C	H	O	R	A	B	A	T	O	B	O	E	
E	R	I	C	O	B	E	S	E	D	E	L	L	
D	E	C	R	E	P	I	T	W	I	S	D	O	M
A	M	I	D	T	A	C	O						
A	C	E	T	I	C	D	A	R	K	N	E	S	S
D	R	Y	E	R	M	O	L	D	Y	A	L	A	
L	O	I	S	H	A	Z	E	S	B	R	A	T	
I	N	N	S	A	G	E	S	P	I	E	T	Y	
B	E	G	I	N	S	I	N	W	O	N	D	E	R
R	O	T	C	E	A	R	N						
M	A	L	A	W	I	L	I	V	E	A	B	L	E
O	R	A	N	E	L	I	D	E	C	R	I	B	
S	E	M	I	S	E	G	E	R	L	A	M	B	
T	A	P	S	T	E	A	R	S	E	Y	E	S	

Answers to Sudoku

1	6	7	3	9	5	8	2	4
3	5	4	1	2	8	7	6	9
8	9	2	6	7	4	5	3	1
2	7	1	9	4	6	3	5	8
5	8	3	7	1	2	9	4	6
6	4	9	8	5	3	1	7	2
4	1	8	2	3	7	6	9	5
7	2	6	5	8	9	4	1	3
9	3	5	4	6	1	2	8	7



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